

MEMORIAL TRIBUTE TO BETTY BURGER

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to Betty Burger, a remarkable public servant and extraordinarily devoted congressional staffer. Betty died on Saturday at the age of 87. Betty was my chief caseworker and my oldest and longest serving staff person. She was still on the payroll as of Saturday.

Although I am deeply saddened by her departure, it brings me comfort to know this devoted mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother slipped peacefully into the hands of her Maker.

It is fitting that Betty's loved ones kept vigil at her bedside. For nearly 40 years, Betty Burger kept vigil for the people of Iowa. She started on Capitol Hill working for Iowa Representative Fred Schwengel. After Congressman Schwengel left office, she worked for an Illinois Congressman by the name of Hanrahan for 2 years. Then she wanted to work for an Iowa Congressman again, and she joined my staff on my first day on the job in Washington after I was elected to the House of Representatives in 1974. Since then, for the last 32 years, Betty has worked as a congressional staffer for the people of Iowa.

If Congress needed any rationale for eliminating mandatory retirement age in 1986, Betty Burger is that example. As my chief caseworker, Betty earned a lifetime of experience on the job mastering the ins and outs of the Federal bureaucracy. Her countless contacts within Federal agencies put a face on the so-called faceless bureaucracy. No one knew how to cut through redtape more swiftly and surely. Betty was a masterful detective the way she tracked down disability claims and benefit errors at the Social Security Administration. She decoded the maze of paperwork at the Veterans Affairs Department, and navigated Byzantine immigration rules for constituents struggling with citizenship, employment status, and deportation issues. Betty Burger knew how to cut to the chase at the State Department for Iowans who were traveling, working, or studying abroad.

Most of Iowa's 2.9 million residents didn't know Betty Burger personally, but I want them to understand how this dedicated public servant made a difference for Iowans. Betty did her job for them with remarkable efficiency, tenacity, and integrity. I heard firsthand gratitude about Betty's work from individual Iowans nearly every time I went home and held town meetings. Betty also touched the lives of Iowans and their families through her work to nominate outstanding young people to our Nation's service academies. She would always talk about what a great group we had this year. Let me tell my colleagues something about Betty. We always had a great group of academy nominees as far as Betty was concerned. These young high school kids and their parents had sev-

eral conversations with Betty as they maneuvered through the nomination process. They were an inspiration to her and she knew with good young people in her academies, such as the ones she helped nominate, our country from a national security standpoint would be left in good hands.

In my office, Betty served as a role model for young staffers and seasoned colleagues alike. Her work ethic taught others to keep one's nose to the grindstone. Her professional attire taught others appearances do make a positive impression in the workplace. Her sharp-witted humor elicited laughter and taught us we could count on Betty to put a smile on everybody's face. Her uncanny grasp of cultural trends and current events taught others how to embrace aging and use one's work and life experiences for the greater good.

I can't talk about Betty without making it clear she was a fiercely loyal and proud Republican. She modeled compassionate conservatism each and every day she helped an Iowan. Day in and day out, Betty untangled a knot at a Federal agency for those who may have felt at the end of their rope trying to get an answer.

I often tell Iowans that representative government is a two-way street. Well, Betty Burger lived and breathed the spirit of representative government. She was the capable, no-nonsense person on the other end of the phone who brought thousands upon thousands of Iowans hope and peace of mind. She paved the street between Iowans and the Federal agencies from which they required service.

As her boss, I owe Betty a debt of gratitude for her tireless commitment, unwavering loyalty to this country, to the people of Iowa, and to me. As Iowa's senior Senator, I place a premium on constituent service. Betty understood this as well as anyone and exceeded my expectations.

As her friend, Barbara and I extend our heartfelt sympathies to Betty's family and the loved ones she leaves behind. As they remember their beloved mother, grandmother, sister, aunt, friend, and neighbor, please know we will dearly miss this classy and spirited Iowan who became part of our family during her honorable tenure—a lifetime—on Capitol Hill.

In the last four decades, many Iowans have felt touched by a guardian angel when Betty worked her magic on their behalf. May God's blessings continue to shine upon this guardian angel from Fairfield, IA, as she rests in peace alongside her husband John.

If I could give some advice to my colleagues, I last saw Betty in early January. If we hadn't been in session in early January of this year, probably the last time I would have seen her would have been before Christmas.

Betty got sick about that time and was going to the doctor. We were keeping in touch with her by phone but always waiting for her to get better and come back to work. Then, all of a sud-

den, she got very weak. We actually thought she would come back to work, but she got weak and then suddenly died.

My advice to colleagues would be this: I didn't get to see her since that last time she was in my office in January. Don't make the mistake I did. I should have been there by her bedside sometime during the period of her last week in hospice. I am sorry I wasn't. To my colleagues, take a lesson from me: When people are sick, see them. They may not come back to the office as you expect.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the remaining time for morning business be yielded back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. Morning business is closed.

INTELLIGENCE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 372, which the clerk will report.

A bill (S. 372) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2007 for the intelligence and intelligence-related activities of the United States Government, the Intelligence Community Management Account, and the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement and Disability System, and for other purposes.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, first, let me express my disappointment that we are here under these circumstances. This is not the way we should be handling this important national security legislation.

The fiscal year 2007 Intelligence authorization bill should have been considered by the Senate, in fact, 7 months ago when it was reported unanimously by the Intelligence Committee. That is usually the way things are meant to work. For reasons that are still not clear to me, it was never brought before the Senate.

Because of the importance of this legislation, Vice Chairman BOND and I made the Intelligence bill the first order of business this January when the new Congress convened. We hoped the Senate could act swiftly on the bill so we could move to the conference with the House, but an anonymous hold on the other side prevented us from bringing up the bill and passing it by unanimous consent. Again, I am not